



Allandale Neighbor

April 2009
Vol 24, Issue 2

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Austin American-Statesman front page, morning after the flood, May 25, 1981

Remembering the Flood

Allan McMurtry

On May 24, 1981, around 8 p.m., it began to rain along the Shoal Creek watershed. It rained all over Austin that night, but along Shoal Creek the rain gauges overflowed at 15". City engineers were left guessing whether it was a 100-year or 500-year rain event. Without a doubt, for those close to Shoal Creek it was a once in a lifetime event.

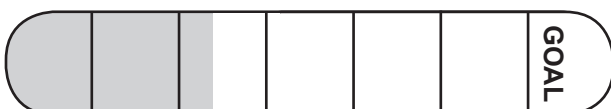
It was a chance to watch your bed float by while your cat crouched on the top shelf of your closet. It was a

chance to feel the water running down your hallway chest high. Swimming/walking by the electrical outlets sent a faint buzz through your limbs, and the lights burned brightly. The phones rang. The gathering roar made you think of the finality of life, the fragility of things, and the helplessness before an uncontrolled river of water. Your paintings flapped against the wall as the current moved them. Your photos in the drawers were already beginning to stick together, and your utensils

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Membership Meter

Goal: 600 Members Current number of Members: 238



**Have you
renewed your
membership?**

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The next ANA EC Meeting is May 28, 2009, 6:30-8:30 p.m, Yarborough Library, 2200 Hancock Drive and is open to the public.

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TREASURER Joe Reynolds
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George Roman

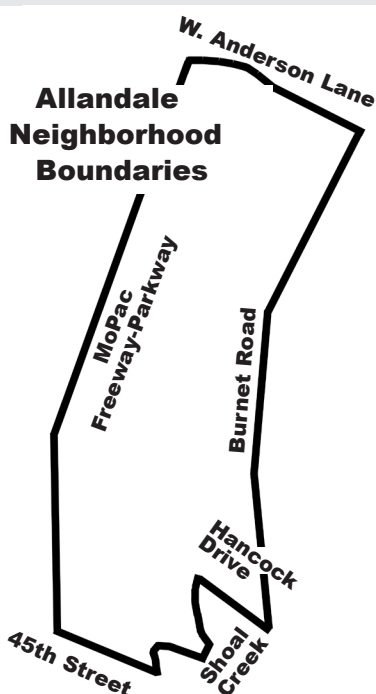
ANA General Meetings are held March and September on the fourth Thursday. The Executive Committee meets at 6:30 p.m. at the Yarborough Library, 2200 Hancock Drive, on the fourth Thursday every month. Meetings are open to the public.

Committees

BEAUTIFICATION Linnea Lemon
BYLAWS George Roman
COMMUNICATIONS Tom Linehan
EVENTS Joe Reynolds
MEMBERSHIP Joe Reynolds
NOMINATING Allan McMurtry
ZONING AND PLANNING Paulette Kern

Allandale Police District Representatives

AJ Rodriguez, 974-4527
Kelly LaHood, 974-5833



ANA President's Letter

Allan McMurtry

The last two months have been busy. If you had a chance to go to the picnic, you saw some Austin City Limits class performances from both Sarah Pierce and the Bellville Outfit. Extremely talented folks, and the venue was free to the public. Kicking off the festivities was the McCallum Steel Drum Band. They were very good and got everybody swaying to some Caribbean music. Roger Beasley helped Allandale sponsor the event, and even some local politicians stopped by, like our State Representative Elliot Naishtat. Next year, keep an eye out for the picnic, lots of things for adults and kids to do.

Just outside the picnic area were 48 new trees. They were planted on the slopes west of the swimming pool by local neighbors and volunteers. More cool places to sit and drink mint juleps in the future. The trees and the clean park were part of Linnea Lemon's and Cheryl Silver's efforts.

I was contacted about a move in the House of Representatives to put up for auction the land just SE of 45th and Bullard. It has been designated as an annex State Cemetery. Currently the bill, HB 4536, has been tabled. But we'll track it. I suggest you do to if you live in the southern part of Allandale. Traffic off these big projects is not fun.

The *Allandale Neighbor* is published and distributed bimonthly by the ANA. For more information contact Cathy Savage at 680-6281 or allandaleads@gmail.com.

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Elections are coming up in May. Neighborhoods remain under assault by irresponsible development. I suggest that you invest some time in learning who supports your right to a livable neighborhood. We'll need them in office. The glue that holds Austin together is the individual commitment to create better schools, parks, neighborhoods, and small business. When that is mixed in with a vibrant music scene and environmental awareness, it creates a very unique city. We forget that at our peril.

If you get a chance, check out the ANA website at www.allandalereporter.org. It's a good source of information about what is going on in Allandale. ❖

Comment Regarding February Story on Allandale Village Shopping Center

The following comment was submitted on the web site, www.allandalereporter.org regarding the history of the Allandale Village Shopping Center:

Knight wrong about 2 suburb centers. Northwest Center NE corner Burnet /Koenig already open (Nov/Dec'49); Allandale not finished. Koenig & Burnet 2 lane w/ditches each side; Crestview subdiv N of Koenig/E of Burnet under construction then. 1st shop in space next to Hangtown was Allandale Pharmacy. Then Library, Bright Bank, Radio Shack; I had business relationship with each. Was in UT Archt School, work part-time @ NW Center (space later barbershop) drafting plans for subdiv E of DPS/N of Koenig (dead-end @ rr then); hence know some history of area.

—Posted by: Frank De Groot 4927 Strass (since 9/51). ❖

Take Pride in Your Neighborhood

Remembering the Flood

continued from page 1

banged under the cabinets as the current swirled them.

You could talk to firemen trying to coax you out of your house to what they felt was safer ground, while you told them that wading through waist-deep water or worse, among the floating cars and logs, was a recipe for death. And then, later, the phone would ring again telling you it was too dangerous for the firemen to come get you. The calculation of danger that night was a quickly-acquired skill. The outcome of that decision was less knowable. Incredibly, you could stand in the cold, waist-high water in your own home late that night and call your kids, telling them one more time that you loved them. And then you would hang up. And both parties would be victim to the personal silence amidst the roar of Shoal Creek.

In the middle of a big, well-equipped, well-trained fire and police department,

it was you and your neighbor against the raging will of Shoal Creek. Even fire trucks couldn't cross the bridges over Shoal Creek. Some stood lonely vigils in front of bridges, the flashing lights bouncing off the lowered trees and torrents of water.

The dark black water might be coming at you from the massive hole in the side of your garage, chasing you out into the night to cling to the big tree in your yard – a tree you still water today, with the tree your son held onto close by. It might carry your cars into the boiling hell of the stream bed like Matchbox toys, and clutch at your skirt, your pants, your slippers, your kids, pulling you and them toward a quick fate amid the churning mud, tumbling furniture, and shredded trees gouging their way toward Town Lake.

Some people never made it home that night. Some were lost from a

courageous act too big-hearted to stand against the stature of Shoal Creek. Some fell to an error in judgment with no time to make corrections. Some stood against bad luck and coursing forces that night to emerge into the light of the next day. Some slipped and fell. Nobody knew why. One family received a hand from a neighbor to carry them to high ground; others heard from no one, just the cold grasp of the creek. And, if your family had turned around the north side of the house rather than the south side, the

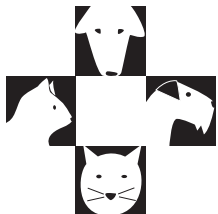
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Remembering the Flood

continued from page 3

neighbor could not have helped.

Some watched the flood lights in the back yard illuminate the creek's climb up the bank, only to hear the windows in the front shatter before the torrents coming into Shoal Creek from outside its own boundaries, from the opposite direction of the known danger. When that effect hit Bullard Drive, as many made for the west side of the street as stayed in their houses or yards. How would you know which way out was safest? Some saw their cars washed into the creek as a reason to stay behind their house walls, while others saw it as a reason to leave.

Shoal Creek Blvd. was first pavement, then sucking black water all along its route. Anybody rushing home that night was a potential victim of sudden water. First a shiny path, then a motor-stopping surge, and, finally, a raging torrent from which some were never found.

On one side of Shoal Creek you could see water pouring out of a neighbor's window. From the opposite side you could see lights on as you hung from the trees like lichen, shifting your weight against the cold water, seeking some relief from the constant pressure to pull you off, out, and under. You could see houses dry above the torrent or see the pulsing water batter your windows, trying to seek a way in, to come and get you.

Your belongings could bubble up in front of you as you struggled to make sense of where you were and what was happening. Where were your kids, your friends, your relatives that night? If you lived in Austin, you feared for somebody at 10 p.m. that evening, whether you were in town or not. As soon as you heard the news from outside, the chills ran down your back.

Of all that I remember from that night, the roar is the one thing I could not comprehend. I had to call my wife out to have her verify it was real. And amid that noise, it still was long moments before the scale translated into the height of ferocity such noise foretold. How were we supposed to

know? This was a creek, not a river, a small urban stream with yards down to the commonly-known edge of the water's reach.

All of the survivors along Shoal Creek

remember two things: the people who came to help and the people who just came to look. The next day was hot. The humidity along Shoal Creek was stifling, especially for those shoveling mud into newly purchased buckets from Stripling Blake or Gipsons up on Burnet. The mud came from their homes. Some were in tears, some in shock; some were angry. There was no familiar place to sleep for those along the Creek, and for months after, even when the sheet rock had been torn out above the water line and new electrical boxes installed, who could sleep securely while those images were fresh?

Few places in Allandale, from the bridge area over Foster Lane to the bridge over 45th, had no stories. Those helping that following Monday had one day off from work to lend a hand. For those along the creek, they were looking at months of cleanup and expense, of unbearable sadness from the loss of loved ones, and hours and days sorting belongings.

The years have passed by since that flood. The Jefferson Neighborhood just north of 35th Street area was excavated, covered in riprap. Houses not torn down by the flood were torn down by the City, taking out 15% to 20% of the neighborhood. Allandale lost several houses just south of a new bridge built over Shoal Creek. Engineers with the Allandale Neighborhood Association began talking about



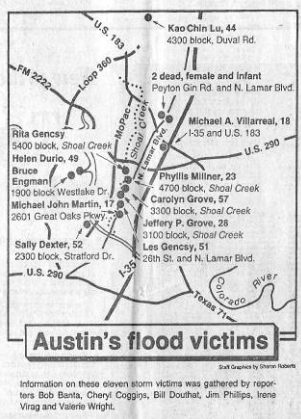
John Cherico begins to haul away what's left of his bike, through what used to be his garage wall.

Cherico House, Austin American-Statesman, May 26, 1981

how to prevent such an episode in the future. John Panak, Terry Leifeste, and Phil Lowell, among others, met with the City's Charlie Graves to discuss a new concept, a holding pond for water. It would be a temporary pond that would allow small amounts of water to pass, but would store large volumes in stair-stepped enclaves. Allandale volunteered Northwest Park and the Pony League ball field as holding ponds and added another to the west.

These ponds required excavation of Northwest Park, taking out the tennis courts, and restricting access to large portions of the park for long periods. Currently, the holding pond west of Shoal Creek below the Far West walk-over is undergoing construction to raise the height of the holding pond. Both during and after the flood, Allandale has taken the largest role in finding a solution that would save lives by slowing down rushing water, allowing time for the stream to drain in a less deadly fashion. The holding ponds north of US 183 were undertaken after the ponds in Allandale were built.

And finally, Allandale received City money to stabilize the banks of Shoal Creek below Northwest Park. It also participated in the design of new bridges over Shoal Creek below the park and over Shoal Creek at White Rock. One of the last pieces of the puzzle was raising the bridge over Shoal Creek at Allandale Road. These projects helped clarify the streambed and prevent clog-



Flood Victims, Austin American-Statesman, May 26, 1981

1981? Most likely it will mitigate the scale of damage and loss of life. But it can't erase the memories of that night for those who were there. For their actions and reactions, for their caring work in the days and weeks later, and for their commitment to make this a better and safer neighborhood, we can be thankful. Some lessons are hard. As

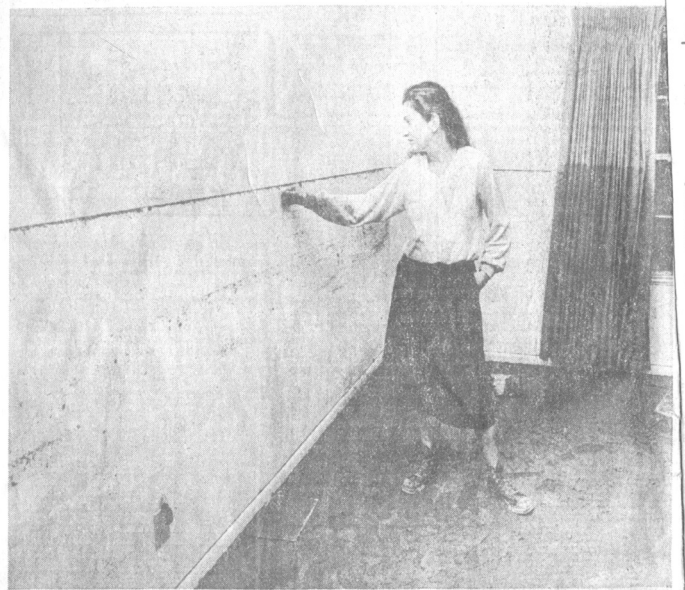
ging of bridges with debris, thereby keeping more of the water within the banks of Shoal Creek itself.

Will this prevent another flood like

the saying goes, the hotter the crucible the finer the steel.

We hope this has given you a flavor of that night. The personal stories of that night are on Allandale's website, www.allandalereporter.org. There are first person recollections from those who survived that night along Shoal Creek. The article by the artist and her cat is but one. Her

words are as sharp as the memories emblazoned in her mind's eye as she toiled that night to stay alive in water up to her neck. We think more stories will come in as memories are jarred and people understand the repository



Fina Mae Ross shows where waterline came in her house on Shoal Creek Blvd. in North Austin.

Austin American-Statesman photo of flood victim Fina Mae Ross

in the *Allandale Reporter* is a permanent record of Allandale's history. Any neighborhood is about its people. This is a chance to read some part of their story. ❖

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Update on Great Northern Dam Project

Linnea Lemon

Here is an update on the Great Northern Dam Project from Darryl Haba, the project supervisor:

"Wanted to let you know that we were able to get all trees down before March 1st as we had indicated to the Neighborhood in the meetings we previously held to avoid the bird nesting. This week until about the end of next week we will be using a chipper to mulch all tree limbs and clearing the site of all debris.

"The neighboring residents have been respectful of our work site and we in turn are focusing on maintaining a neat work site.

"We were able to save four trees that were scheduled for removal, one of which bordered a resident's property. The others are on the eastern side of the property and we were pleased we could leave them in place as they were some nice oak trees.

"I would say that within another two weeks, people will see a lot more excavation taking place as we start to lay-out the new spillway area and start cutting in the new maintenance road.

"I wanted to see if you were interested in looking at the color chart of the concrete when we get these submittals from the contractor so that you have the opportunity to see that we are adding the color the Neighborhood requested. Thanks again and let me know if you hear of any concerns as we will do our best to accommodate people when we can." ❖

Managed Lanes on MoPac

Kay Newell

The Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority has announced plans to move forward with the development of managed lanes on the MoPac Expressway. The managed lanes would be constructed within the existing

right-of-way. There would be one managed lane in each direction from Farmer Lane to Lady Bird Lake. The managed lanes would be separated from other traffic by barriers, and for safety and operational efficiency access would be limited to just a few locations along the route.

The goal of a managed lane is to ensure congestion-free travel for buses, emergency vehicles, and individual drivers who choose to use it. To accomplish that goal, the Mobility Authority will use congestion pricing – where tolls are higher when traffic is heavy and a lower when traffic is light. Traffic studies indicate the managed lanes will result in improved travel times for all users of the MoPac Expressway.

With the addition of managed lanes, the MoPac Expressway would meet federal and state requirements to qualify for sound wall construction for several neighborhoods along the corridor. Since access to the lanes will be limited, the project will not impact adjacent roadways such as Northland Drive.

In response to drought, many cultures hold a rain dance. This show and sale is our response to the economic drought. In good times or bad we deliberately go to pot every day- we are your community potters.

We are also your friends and neighbors and we need your help to create a ground swell of mindful local shopping. Come to our show and let's get to know each other.



Photo by Kim Mosley

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The Mobility Authority is in the process of developing an implementation timeline for the project. ❖

Why the Move to a Blower-Free Neighborhood?

Mary Lou Serafine

Most people do not recognize – as I did not, until I started researching this – that the health risks caused by leaf blowers are very serious. Surprisingly (at least to me), the danger of leaf blowers is not only because of the blowers' gas-powered motors and deafening noise. Rather, both electric and gas blowers raise lung and heart disease risk because of their very purpose: to aim a stream of air going up to 250 miles per hour at an area of turf, asphalt, or concrete. This moves leaves, but in so doing blows into the air pesticides, herbicides, fecal matter, any naturally-occurring asbestos in the soil and street, and, most harmful of all, literally pounds of fine particulate matter referred to as "PM" pollution. Particulate matter makes up the pollutant in smoke, smelt from metal processing, and exhaust fumes (think: one blower is equivalent to up to 17 idling cars). All leaf blowers, whether electric or gas, entrain into the air both 10-micron and 2.5-micron particles. Particulate matter inhalation has been implicated in coughing, restricted breathing, decreased lung function, aggravated asthma, chronic bronchitis, irregular heartbeat, nonfatal heart attacks, and premature death in people with heart or lung disease. Additionally, children,

because of their smaller lung size, ongoing development, and the fact that they like to run around and play outside, are greatly more at risk than adults. The smaller particles are more toxic. They remain airborne for hours or days (sometimes weeks) and can travel up to 500 miles, by some estimates.

The problem with inhaling particulate matter is that the particles stick to the airways or can travel into the lungs. From there, potentially into the blood stream, heart, and other organs. Particle inhalation causes the airways to develop mucous and cilia (tiny hair) movement in an effort to remove the particles, resulting in coughing, asthma, bronchitis, and other conditions. But if the particles cannot be removed (by coughing or swallowing the mucous), they can travel more deeply into the lungs (especially the smaller 2.5-micron size), where they can remain stuck for a long time, potentially causing cancer and emphysema. From the deepest area of the lungs, where removal is difficult, they can pass into the blood stream, and then to the heart and other organs. Exercise causes people to breathe faster and more deeply. Thus walking, jogging, and running through a particle-rich space is more harmful than sitting or driving in it. I have come to the opinion that everyone who believes they are suffering from

"allergies" in Austin would do well to evaluate their exposure to leaf blowers anywhere within a few-mile radius of where they spend significant amounts of time. That would be most of us.

So what should we do? I think it is telling that government publications make these suggestions for how we can limit our exposure to airborne particulate matter:

1. stay indoors
2. keep your windows closed
3. run the air conditioning
4. reduce strenuous exercise
5. if you exercise outdoors at all, walk, don't jog or run.

Taken seriously, these are limitations on daily life and health that few of us would accept. The better solution is to eliminate leaf blower use. Check elsewhere in this issue for a list of blower-free lawn care service providers.

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Where All Children Belong

Northwest Recreation Center Seeking Board Members

Greetings neighbors! The NW Recreation Center is a wonderful resource for us – right smack in the middle of our neighborhood. It serves a regional community, not just Allandale, and offers a full complement of recreational programs for children, teens, and adults. NWRC is getting a face lift – new additions to the building at last! – so this year is an important one for the Center and the neighbor-

hoods served.

The Advisory Board meets one Thursday a month, helping NWRC Director Lucas Massie and his staff in an advisory capacity – offering ideas, interface to neighborhoods and City administrative staff, and general support to develop NWRC's mission in our community.

There are membership opportunities currently on the Board. If you are

interested in participating, please email the NRWC President Ms. Sammi Frye: sammi_frye@hotmail.com for more information, and to obtain an application. We appreciate your support!

Thank you!
Gerry Schwartz
NWRC Advisory Board Treasurer
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Celebrate Allandale! Picnic in the Park 2009

Tom Linehan

The Allandale Picnic in the Park was the place to be Sunday afternoon, March 29, 2009 in Austin. We had it all: great music, food, vendors/craft booths, and perfect weather. Thanks to the Allandale Neighborhood Association and all of the volunteers who pitched in to make it such a wonderful afternoon. And thanks to Roger Beasley for helping underwrite it. We had three bands: the McCallum Steel Drum Band, Sarah Pierce, and the Bellville Outfit. All of them were excellent. There were over 500 people that came and went that afternoon. Each of the bands played for about an hour. A small village of vendors set up at the bottom of the hill next to the picnic tables for people to browse and shop.

It included an array of craft booths, two solar energy companies, ClayWays, Pure Rain, Rogue Training, Apple a Day Petcare, and other small businesses. Phil's Ice House was there. They sold out of hamburgers around 5:00. Amy's Ice Cream and Russell's Bakery were also there taking care of people's sugar cravings, as was Jim Jim's. Jim Jim's went through all of the shaved ice they brought. Hank Waddel, a local sculptor, set up an art installation for visitors to enjoy. We also had local state representative and Allandale resident Elliot Naishtat there. Some of the local candidates made an appearance.

The Allandale Picnic in the Park had everything you would hope to find at a community outing and more! ❖



Volunteers Power Up Pond Clean up!

Linnea Lemon, Allandale Beautification Chair

Bravo, Fantastic, Wunderbar, and just plain Great are all words to describe the clean-up of NW Park on It's My Park Day.

Saturday, March 7th, 2009 over 70 hardy volunteers divided into 5 groups and tackled various projects around Beverly Sheffield Northwest Park. Due to the overwhelming response, we were able to tackle new projects!

On Saturday, we had volunteers of all ages helping out. From the toddlers helping to plant in front of the pool,



to adults climbing the rock wall... Everyone found a project! A special shout-out to the Gullett Green club for their tremendous support.

And, we would be nowhere without our fearless leader: Malcolm St. Romain. Malcolm is always inspiring, prodding, and encouraging us along the way. Thank you Malcom!

If you have a chance, please drop by the NW Park pond to see the difference. I highly recommend a quick walk around the pond to get the full impact of the volunteer improvements. (Special thanks to the TEXAS ROWING CENTER for donating the use of canoes for the day. Without their generous donation, much of the work would have been impossible.)

At the Saturday's It's My Park Day at NW Park, the volunteers:

- painted railing "entrance" to the pedestrian bridge. What a welcome sight!
- mulched trees to add protection to exposed roots.
- cleared vines and overgrowth from the back "cliff" of the pond.



- weeded the decomposed granite paths from the basketball courts to the parking lot.
- removed invasive species from the island.
- thinned cattails and algae from the pond.
- exposed and re-set stones along the border of the pond.

I know we are super busy, but I think it would be great if we continued to show our support for beautiful green spaces. I am always looking for ways to engage and inspire participation in the park clean-ups.

Be well everyone. Allandale should count its blessings for all the volunteers who made this clean-up possible.

Thanks for being my great partner in non-crime. ♦



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Neighborhood Q&A with Mayoral Candidate Brewster McCracken

Tom Linehan

I don't think there is any better way of learning about a candidate than at a meet-the-candidate gathering at a neighbor's house. At these events, although voters want to know what the candidate's plans are for making the city as a whole a better place, they are also looking for answers to neighborhood issues. For instance, if elected Mayor, how would the candidate address concerns regarding the lack of public space in the VMU developments the city is so aggressively promoting for our neighborhood? How would he deal with the problems stemming from the homeless population living under nearby bridges? Neighbors had an opportunity to ask these questions on Saturday, February 28, at Jason Mittman and Sheila Reiter's house on the north end of Shoal Creek, not far from where the Wal-Mart is going in. Allandale residents were invited to the couple's house to meet city council member and mayoral candidate Brewster McCracken.

Of course, I have to mention the Wal-Mart because that's one of those

issues that brought some at the meet-the-candidate meeting to Council chambers for the first time. Yes, the topic came up in the meeting. It was clear that Brewster was not in support of the development (I'm not sure any of the council members would say they supported it). He said the timing of the filing of the application for the development was the result of knowledge gained by a stakeholder from the design standard process that Brewster took the lead on. "I felt he had betrayed our trust," Brewster said.

This upcoming election is particularly important to Austin, given the dismal state of the economy. The new mayor will certainly influence how well Austin weathers the economic downturn. Jason Mittman kicked off the meeting by introducing Brewster from his vantage point as a developer – "Things are going to get worse, and we need a mayor who is forward thinking when it comes to taking advantage of the stimulus package," Jason said.

There were about 25 neighbors in attendance. Before responding to ques-

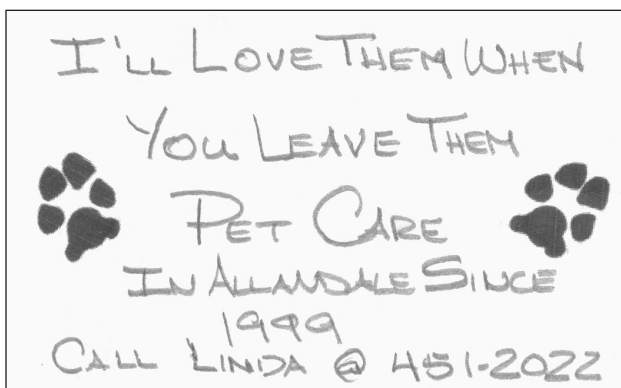
tions, Brewster talked about his vision for the city and the need for Austin to continue its tradition of being proactive with regard to planning out its economic future. He compared the current economic challenges facing Austin to those Texas faced in the late eighties. Brewster is from Corpus, and he said Corpus chose to just ride it out, whereas Austin took a very different approach. Austin was aggressive about recruiting high tech businesses and developing the training programs at ACC that would develop skilled workers to support those businesses. Brewster said the city's planning and hard work served it well. Corpus, on the other hand, did not fare as well.

Brewster's vision is to build a solar economy, and he has begun to lay the groundwork for it. He sees his plan as a regional initiative and has been working on a coalition that includes city government, the University of Texas, the Environmental Defense Fund, and an assortment of high-tech companies. Called the Pecan Street

Continued on page 12

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Brewster McCracken Q&A

Continued from page 11



Project, the initiative is directed at making Austin, and the region, a leader in developing new energy technologies that will not only benefit Austin but the nation as a whole. "It's about actively deciding to determine our destiny but to do it in a way that reflects our values," Brewster said.


Brewster also spent time talking about public spaces. He has a son who has taught him the importance of hav-

ing public spaces where you live. Prior to moving to the Triangle, Brewster lived in a neighborhood where there were no sidewalks. He couldn't take a walk while pulling his son in his wagon. This awareness is also something reinforced by the work of Allandale's Steven Zettner, who is behind the Sustainable Neighborhoods initiative. "Steve is the first person," Brewster said, "who really educated me on how important it is that you integrate public spaces into neighborhood developments, including parks and sidewalks. He even has some incredible calculations on what a difference that makes. Because of that and my experience living in the Triangle, I have learned how critical it is having parks where you live." His intent is to address funding for some of these public space issues with the 2012 bond election.

Brewster was asked questions that covered a variety topics, including: problems with the homeless in Allandale, the seemingly hostile environment at the City towards builders, and the role of the Small Business Develop-

ment Center and green collar jobs. I commented that Brewster's position on public space is refreshing, given it's not something that was required of the 5350 Burnet Rd development currently under construction. Steven Zettner said there is no requirement for parks, trails, plazas, courtyards or playscapes in these mixed use developments and asked whether there is mixed use district around Austin that represents a minimum level of open space acceptable for a district like Anderson? Brewster said the Triangle. Steven said, "that's setting the bar pretty high. The Triangle has one of the highest levels of open space in Austin."

People seemed to leave the meeting satisfied with what they heard. There is no better way to learn about a candidate than to attend a face-to-face meeting. Of course, a candidate's history and his voting record are also very telling. Go to www.brewstermccracken.com to learn more about him. There will be a candidate meet-and-greet with Lee Leffingwell later this month, and another report will follow. ♦



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Q&A with Mayoral Candidate Lee Leffingwell

Tom Linehan

Lee Leffingwell is running for mayor because, as he puts it, "These are tough times and the City needs a steady hand and a strong hand, someone who will stay focused on the fundamentals." Jackie O'Keefe, Andrew Donaho, and Donna Beth McCormick hosted a meet-the-candidate get-together Saturday, March 21, with council member and mayoral candidate Lee Leffingwell. Jackie and Andrew opened up their doors onto their backyard deck that looks out onto Jackie's beautiful garden where the meeting took place. They served BBQ and refreshments.

In his opening remarks, Lee went on to list the fundamentals as the economy, traffic, social services, environmental protection, safety, and delivering effective and efficient public services.

He said he also wants to use the position to build trust between the City and the people. He proposes having council meetings at locations around the city and creating a community cabinet made up of people from all parts of the city and walks of life. They would meet every couple of months to talk about what the issues are outside of City Hall. He is also proposing an intern program for high school and college-age students called Austin Core. It would be a year-long academic program that would include work that is both useful to them and to the community.

On the economy Lee said he has a different view than his opponents. "Brewster keeps saying that my approach is to hunker down." That's not all that bad in his opinion. "I really do think that hunkering down means fiscal responsibility and focusing our efforts on Austin. We ought be helping build small businesses and putting people back to work." He said we should be making it easier for businesses to

work through the city process. With regard to traffic, Lee is proposing dedicating the next bond election in 2010 to transportation. It would include monies for roads, intersection improvements, and traffic light synchronization. "We also need to fix and construct sidewalks and bicycle lanes." When it comes to mass transit he said "we need to put a viable plan for mass transit before the voters" and thinks there is room for improvement in Cap Metro.

Lee concluded saying "Austin is the greatest city in America. We've been through tough times before. With strong city leadership in the Mayor's office, we can emerge from this stronger than ever. We have to take care of the basics."

Q - Lack of transparency at the City utility.

A - Lee agreed more could be done to open it up.

Q - What's the role of the City when it comes to jobs and the economy?

Continued on page 14

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Lee Leffingwell Q&A

Continued from page 13

A - City's role as helper, facilitator, advice giver, and red tape eliminator.

Q - Austin doesn't rank high on the happiness factors, what can we do about that?

A - We actually do well in areas like air quality and water conservation. We are an environmentally conscious city. We are committed to getting 30% of our power from renewable resources by 2020.

Q - Thoughts on legislation concerning how public transportation is funded.

A - Supports it because the current system is not adequate. Cap Metro only gets 10% of the costs for bus service paid for through fares. The rest of it comes from sales tax. We need additional revenue sources.

Q - What's the City going to do to help people who have been laid off from the tech industry start new businesses?

A - We should make it easier to start a business with various help classes and also make it easier for them at the per-



mitting level. Also need to be aware that our economy is changing and that some of the jobs won't be coming back. Sees new opportunities in renewable energies, medical technology, and digital media.

Q - Neighborhood concerns about impact of VMU on neighborhoods.

A - Agrees there is a need for density but has supported neighborhood's recommendations where they have opposed it.

Q - What about the comprehensive planning process.

A - I believe we need to delay moving forward on the comprehensive plan

because it's upside down. The input needs to come from the neighborhood planning organizations. Need to postpone selection of a consultant. The issue has been delayed until April 23. If it's going to be successful, it has to be a community-driven process not a consultant-driven process.

Annual Allandale Super Sale Is May 2



Linnea Lemon

The Super Sale is an annual event in which all Allandale residents are encouraged to participate by having a garage or yard sale on the same day. We place an ad in the *Austin American Statesman*, on local cable access television, and online. You do the rest!

Allandale neighborhood boundaries are MoPac, Burnet, Anderson Lane, and Hancock.

Contact coordinator by April 28th for more info and to be listed on the online map. Promotion will be ongoing, but the earlier you contact us the better. Email: supersale09@fitmom.info or call 750-8902. ❖

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Making Your Home Safe – Windows

Keith Savage

After driving around a loop around Allandale, Tom had selected his target: An older house with a large bush obscuring a ground-level window. A few days prior, he had seen a Lexus and a Mercedes parked in the garage. “Ought to be good pickings,” he thought.

Wearing his meter man disguise, Tom walked up to the front door and rang the door bell. No answer, and no sign of anyone around. No visible security stickers. Time to get to work.

Tom walked up to the window on the side of the house. He jammed a large screwdriver into the sash and pried. The old window held firm. With a sigh, Tom pulled out a roll of duct tape and started covering the window. Three muffled whacks from his rubber mallet disintegrated the glass. In one piece, Tom pulled out the broken glass, still adhered to the duct tape covering. Tom quickly slithered into the now open window. In less than 4 minutes, he was out the door, his satchel stuffed with jewelry, 2 laptops, a camera, and a folder full of old financial statements.

Standard residential house windows can make your house any easy burglary target. How can one secure their windows without going to the extreme of installing ugly metal bars?

1. Always close and lock your windows when you leave the house. This simple tip cannot be emphasized enough! Thieves will often scope an area looking for targets of opportunity. Open windows and

doors are thief magnets.

2. If you open ground-level windows at night for ventilation, consider restrictor devices that limit how far a window can be opened.
3. If you are buying new windows, consider hurricane rated windows which are built from laminated glass, similar to a car windshield. Laminated windows have a tough plastic liner sandwiched between 2 layers of glass. This makes the window glass difficult to break through. These windows will also help protect your house from tornado damage.
4. Existing non-laminated windows can be reinforced with security film, an extremely tough clear polyester sheet. The film is applied to the inside glass surface just like car tint. Price is around \$6/sq ft installed. 3M is the largest manufacturer.
5. Windows within reaching distance of door locks are particularly attractive to thieves. These windows need to be either glass block, laminated, or protected by security film. If those options are not possible, consider changing the lock to a dead bolt that is keyed on both sides.
6. Trim back shrubs and bushes that conceal windows and doors. Thieves always prefer to remain hidden during a break-in.
7. Consider supplemental window locks. Inexpensive double-hung vinyl win-



dows can easily be pried open where the two sashes meet. Adding an extra locking device to each window will prevent common prying attacks. The same goes for glass patio doors, which are essentially giant sliding windows. These will need extra pins or screws installed to prevent a thief from simply lifting them out of the track.

Remember, the goal of securing your house is to make your house a less desirable target. Even the best laminated window with supplemental locks can be penetrated by a determined thief, but why would a thief make the effort when there are plenty of easier targets?

Good luck! ♦

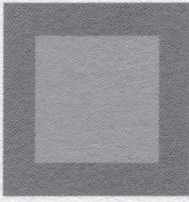
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Allandale Neighborhood Association General Membership Meeting Minutes

26 March 2009

The regular General Membership meeting of the Allandale Neighborhood Association (ANA) was held on Thursday, March 26, 2009, at 6:30 p.m. at Ralph Yarborough Library, the President being in the chair and the Secretary being present*. The minutes of the previous Executive Committee (EC) meeting (26 Feb 2009) and of the previous General Membership meeting (25 August 2008) were read and approved.

*Members Present: (secretary arrived late: initial minutes taken by Peggy Maceo) Allan McMurtry, President; Joe Reynolds, Treasurer; Mary Jean Matus, Secretary; Donna Beth McCormick; Paulette Kern; George Roman; Cynthia Keohane; Peggy Maceo.

Joe Reynolds gave the Treasurer's report:

- Nonprofit Business: \$14,746.65
- Savings: \$ 6,532.41
- CD (12 - 17 months): \$ 2,000.00

- Net Inflows/Outflows 1/1/09 - 3/26/09: \$ 7,358.25

Updates given as follows:

- Picnic in the Park, March 29: by Tom Linehan
- Tree planting at Northwest Park, March 28: by Peggy Maceo and Allan McMurtry
- Bylaws: by Allan McMurtry
Work continues to modify bylaws in order to make concurrent with state law; for review and approval of the general membership at the next General Meeting in September.
- Austin Neighborhood Council (ANC): by Cynthia Keohane
Cynthia noted that the ANC represents over 80 Austin neighborhoods. She is currently the North Central Sector representative of the ANC, which consists of 11 neighborhoods. She encouraged all to join the Allandale neighborhood Yahoo group as she often posts updates and important announcements relating to the ANC.

Committee Reports given as follows:

- Planning: by Paulette Kern
Meetings regarding Austin's Comprehensive Plan have not yet begun; the City is still in the process of hiring consultants. Need interested

Allandale residents to volunteer to assist/represent Allandale in Comprehensive Plan.

- Safety: by Donna Beth McCormick
Will include table at spring picnic for information and to recruit Neighborhood Block Captains.
- Memberships: by Peggy Maceo
A suggestion was made that Block Captains be included in membership efforts.
- Bylaws: by George Roman
As reported previously by Allan, changes are being made to the bylaws to be presented at the next meeting of the general membership.
- Nominations: by Joe Reynolds
The ANA will be in need of a new Treasurer by September as Joe's term as Treasurer will be ending.

Old Business - none

New Business

- Allandale resident John Panak raised the issue of numerous home remodeling projects within Allandale violating existing deed restrictions. He noted that enforcement of deed restrictions is up to the neighborhood. It was also noted that many building projects are not being properly permitted.
- Steve Zettner invited all to attend



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the North Central Austin Candidate Forum, April 13, 6:30 p.m., St. Louis Catholic Church. The ANA is one of several neighborhoods co-sponsoring the event. A major concern that candidates will be asked to address includes nearby rezoning activities. It was clarified that the ANA cannot and does not endorse political candidates.

- Joe Reynolds proposed that efforts be undertaken to have the new building at Northwest Recreation Center renamed in honor of Phyllis Brinkley, in recognition of her contributions to Allandale.
- Joe Reynolds made a call for volunteers to assist with the 4th of July picnic; other summer activities expected.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m. ❖

Get to know
your neighbors—
organize a
block party!

Dog Talk: Craziiness at the Front Door

Cheryl Silver

I am always interested in how I am received when I enter a house with dogs – are they jumping up and barking and generally carrying on like they have taken leave of their senses? Are they keeping all four feet on the floor and greeting me with a relaxed demeanor? Is there a proprietary barking alert? Maybe they are trying to push past me to bolt out the front door? Uncontrollable behavior is a common complaint of human family members. This can be fixed – really!

My recommendation is to aim for behavior that keeps all “four on the floor.” This is not hard to achieve, especially if your friends and family will pitch in for a few training sessions and if everyone buys into civilizing these furry family members.

A knock on your door or the ringing of the doorbell is the typical trigger that will start your dog’s over-reaction. Our goal in training will be to associate these triggers with a new response – sitting calmly – that has a payoff that is

meaningful to your dog. If your dog is already crate trained, that will help, or if they have a dog bed that they love, that will be great, too. Of course, if your dog will already “sit” on command, all the better. If none of these pieces are in place, don’t worry – all is not lost.

Basically, you will need to show your dog specifically what you expect, and you will need to reward the desired behavior. Then, you will need to provide many opportunities for your dog to practice the appropriate response. To teach and practice an acceptable response you will need at least two people – one to be on each side of the door. You will also need some extraordinarily wonderful treats – cut up some chicken breast, pot roast, cheese, or even some of the wonderful Natural Balance meat logs that hang in pet stores and look like salamis. You need a clear goal, many opportunities to practice very close together in time, great rewards for performance, and people to help the dog succeed.

This process is structured and I am just touching on the highlights. You

Continued on page 18

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Dog Talk

Continued from page 17

would be inside the house with your dog, the treats would be ready and available, the crate/dog bed would be near the door, and your friend/neighbor/family member would be outside to initiate the trigger by knocking on the door/ringing the bell. You would immediately lead your dog to the appropriate spot, hold him there while

feeding treats, and would then open the door and maintain the dog where desired and give treats. The “visitor” would stay a few moments, then leave. You would repeat this general process about 10 times. You can expect to start seeing the dog figure out that the trigger is the first indicator that he can do what is expected and get a highly valued payoff.

Again – I have just touched on the surface of the process, but you can see

that it is not complicated.

I hope this gives you heart that this problem can be resolved.....Remember: Train – don’t complain.

If folks reading this want to get together to practice with their dogs, that would be great and I would be game to help organize these sessions.

Let’s talk about working on this in your household.

csilver2@austin.rr.com

454-7219 ❖

Don’t miss “Jack and the Beanstalk” at Brentwood Park in May!

The Violet Crown Community Theater will be offering a free performance of “Jack and the Beanstalk” at the outdoor amphitheater of Brentwood Elementary School (near the swimming pool) on **May 30th at 5:00 PM.**

Enjoy family fun and support the neighborhood at this unforgettable

event. Feel free to bring folding chairs, blankets, food and drinks.

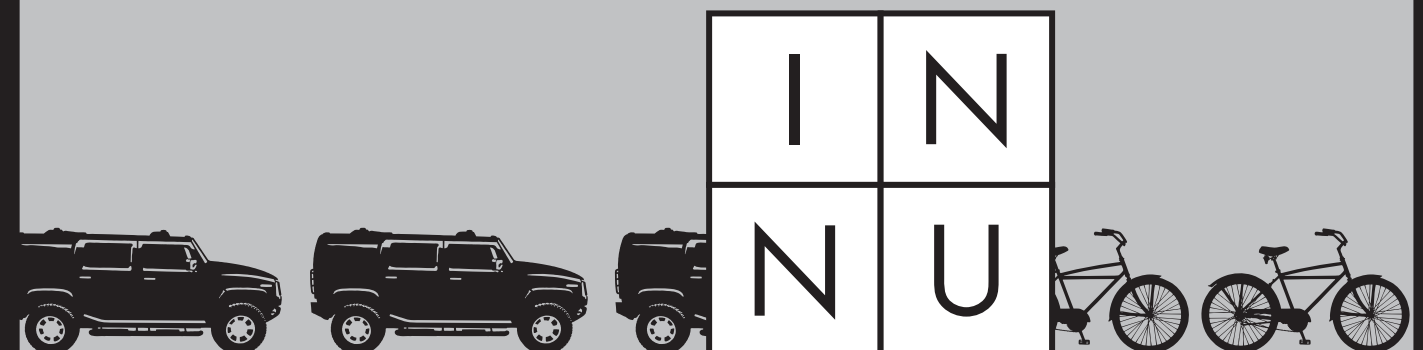
Additional performances will also be held at the following venues:

- Triangle Farmer’s Market – 6/3 @ 7 PM
- Downtown Farmer’s Market – 6/6 @ 11 AM

Support a new neighborhood tradition by attending “Jack and the Beanstalk.” ❖



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Gullett Good News Column

Stephanie Schulz

For the fourth year in a row, Gullett Elementary topped all other Austin elementary schools in BookSpring's RIF Read-A-Thon. Gullett Elementary School students read more pages and raised more money than students in other city schools. For the record, the Geckos raised \$21,000 and will hold onto the Read-A-Thon trophy for another year.

All tallied, Austin students raised \$106,000 and read more than 825,000 pages during the two-week contest. (BookSpring is the non-profit organization created from the merger of Reading is Fundamental of Austin and Capital Area Reach Out and Read.)

Rain postponed Gullett's Good Sport Day, and threatened to do the same for the rescheduled day, March 27th. The all-day event is a student favorite, with the highlight being the baton relays. Physical education teacher Patti Brausse works hard to pull off the event, instilling in Gecko students an appreciation for physical education, as the children look forward to the fun event; there's no class work and lots of camaraderie.

March was a hectic month for the Geckos. Not only did the school enjoy Sports Day, but parents and students participated in the school's silent auc-

tion in early March. Students were invited to watch a movie while parents bid on their favorite items. Lake vacations and airline tickets were big money-makers in the live auction. For all those local sponsors who donated, thanks so much!

Our students also completed the TAKS Tests with flying colors. No official results were posted at press time, but the Geckos appeared to be on the way to another Exemplar showing. (Good Job students!). The week after Spring Break, the Geckos received their report cards, and began the last nine weeks of school.

Yes, summer will be here soon, but before school breaks for the hot months, the following events will take place:

- April 10: Student Holiday
- April 21: Windermere Players; the fourth and fifth graders perform at 7 p.m.
- April 28: Bugz, the second grade musical starts at 6:30 p.m.
- April 20 - 27: No screen week; turn off the television and the computer!
- May 12: Spring choir concert is scheduled for 7 p.m.
- June 3: School's out for summer!

To get the most current information about what's happening at Gullett, visit our website at gullettgeckos.com. The site features many pages about the classes and teach-

ers, various clubs and organizations, and lots of information that parents need to know. Also, many of our teachers have their own blogs with information specific to their classrooms. ❖

Treating Fire Ants

Wizzie Brown

There are many options to keep fire ants at low levels in your yard. Treatment should be based on what works best for you and your family. Some things to consider are chemical preference (natural vs. synthetic products), how long a product will manage fire ants, product cost, and ease of product use.

Broadcast baits are typically broadcast over the entire yard using a hand held spreader, but some bait formulations can utilize a push spreader, so read the label for correct application equipment. Baits come in natural or synthetic formulations and are fairly easy to use since the ants do most of the work. Baits are attractive to fire ants, so the ants seek it out, pick it up, and carry it back to the mound to share with others in the colony.

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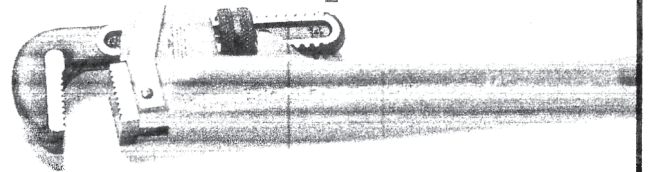
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Recent Postings on the ANA Newsgroup:

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Treating Fire Ants

Continued from page 19

Depending on what active ingredient you choose, baits will take anywhere from a few days to several weeks for you to see results; and results can last from zero days to 8 to 12 months.

Broadcast granulars are spread over the entire yard using a drop or push spreader. Granulars need to be watered into the soil after they are broadcast. When fire ants excavate the soil to create their mound, they come into contact with the pesticide and die, so broadcast granulars should be put out before mounds begin to pop up in the spring. Granular broadcast treatments usually take several weeks to see results, but results can last from 12 to 18 months.

Individual mound treatments come in a variety of formulations such as dusts, liquid, aerosol, granulars, and baits. When baits are used as a mound treatment, they should be sprinkled around the outside of the mound, not on top of the mound. Fire ants do not look for food on top of the mound. Granular mound treatments typically need to be watered in with 1 - 2 gallons of water; always read the label to

see if water is required. Liquid mound treatments are mixed with water before drenching the mound. When using water with a liquid treatment or to water in a granular or dust product, start watering on the outside of the mound and spiral in towards the middle of the mound.

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600. Also check out www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com ❖

Constable's Notebook

Constable Bruce Elfant

"Do you realize that fluoridation is the most monstrously conceived and dangerous Communist plot we have ever had to face?" Based on a recent presentation at a neighborhood meeting, this line uttered by General Jack D. Ripper in the 1960's movie *Dr. Strangelove* continues to strike a nerve with many who believe that fluoride in our water supply is dangerous and that powerful forces are working to prevent the truth about fluoride from getting out.

In the early 1900s, Dr. Frederick McKay began an almost 30-year study to determine what was causing the staining of teeth in Colorado. He concluded that although stained, the teeth showed "a singular absence of decay" that was caused by the presence of fluoride in the water. Subsequent studies concluded that the presence of fluoridation significantly reduces the incidence of cavities. In 1945, some municipalities began adding fluoride to their drinking water. The City of Austin began fluoridating its water supply in 1973 after passage of a voter referendum. About 2/3 of U.S. drinking water is currently fluoridated.

Fluoridation opponents argue that fluoride contains a high level of arsenic, lead, and chromium and has a cumulative effect on the body. There are some medical professionals in and out of government who have written that fluoridation of drinking water increases risks for osteoporosis, kidney and liver disease, and cancer. In 2006 the National Academy of Sciences recommended that the EPA lower the 4 parts per million maximum allowable amount of fluoride but also acknowledged that only a fraction of Ameri-

Continued on page 22

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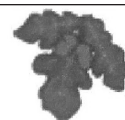


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Constable's Notebook

Continued from page 21

cans are exposed to that much fluoride in drinking water. Austin's water supply averages less than 1 part per million. In 2006 the American Dental Association, while supportive of fluoridation, recommended that infants avoid fluoridated water. Opponents also question the impartiality of organizations supporting fluoridation, including the American Dental Association, American Medical Association, and the Centers for Disease Control, and suggest that these organizations are "about profits as well as health."

Those who support fluoridation agree that fluoride is toxic when consumed in excessive amounts, but the vast majority of drinking water is well below EPA maximum levels. They cite

140 studies conducted in 20 countries concluding that water fluoridation has reduced the incidence of cavities up to 40% in children and 35% in adults.

The Center for Disease Control cites fluoridation "as one of 10 great public health achievements of the 20th century." U. S. Surgeon General Richard H. Carmona wrote that "fluoridation is the single most effective public health measure to prevent tooth decay and improve oral health over a lifetime, for both children and adults."

It is a uniquely American phenomenon that despite near unanimity among national medical and scientific organizations in support of water fluoridation, a spirited debate continues in some quarters. While most Americans accept and support fluoridation, it is healthy for conventional wisdom to be periodically tested. After all, it was not

all that long ago when medical professionals assured Americans that smoking was perfectly safe. ❖

Planting our Prize - Tree Planting in Northwest Park

Cheryl Silver

Linnea Lemon, our dedicated Beautification Chair, worked tirelessly with so many pieces of our city administration including PARD and the Austin Parks Foundation and TreeFolks and more-----I know I am forgetting someone, but they were all critical to the success of our tree planting at Northwest Park that took place on Saturday morning, March 28. The turnout was wonderful and spirits were high.

All of this started with the efforts of neighbors who got their yards certified as wildlife habitats and the neighbors who helped with the project on the island and it all culminated in our winning second prize in the city's contest. Second prize was 50 trees from the Austin Parks Foundation selected for

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their suitability to the park. The trees were planted in the area between the swimming pool and the tennis courts. The City pre-dug the holes and installed an irrigation system powered by a solar panel in advance of the tree planting.

Well, I have my opinion.....in this instance the second prize was definitely the grand prize. The outcome will change the look of our park for decades to come. HUGE thanks to everyone. ❖



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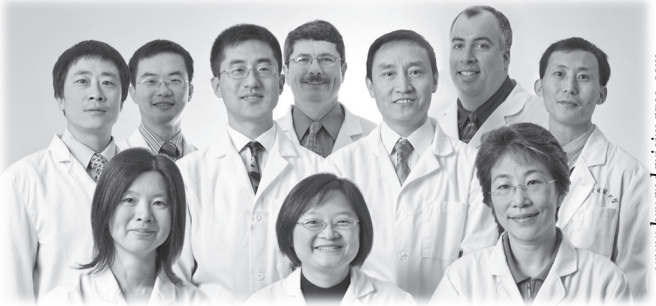
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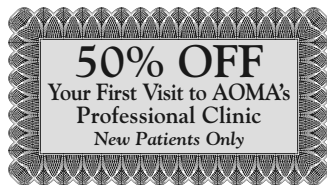
Back row: Xiaotian Shen, LAc 497; Song Luo, PhD, LAc 950;
Yongxin Fan, LAc 663; William Morris, LAc 1009; Jamie Wu, LAc 320;
Robert Laguna, LAc 352; Yuxing Liu, PhD, LAc 758.
Front Row: Yuxia Qiu, LAc 568; Zheng Zeng, LAc 678;
Zhongling Zhang, LAc 441. Not pictured: Yan Wu, LAc 443

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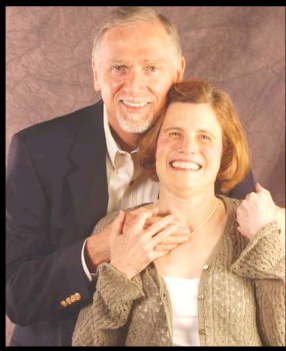
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